

Interview with Aunt Phoebe Boyd, Dunnsville, Virginia 1935

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[*pause*] ???

Aunt Phoebe Boyd: Hmm? Hmm? Say what?

Emily: Aunt Phoebe, did you ever, did you ever work in the house for anybody, or did you work in the field for people?

Aunt Phoebe Boyd: I worked in the house with Mrs. Melissa Armstrong, and I was a youngster.

Emily: What kind of work did you do in that house?

Aunt Phoebe Boyd: Had to clean up, and set the table, tote in the eating. And then right after prepare bed.

Emily: Ahha.

Aunt Phoebe Boyd: I didn't work in the field.

Emily: Where did you cook in those days? What did you cook on?

Aunt Phoebe Boyd: They cook on, you know they didn't have stoves like they got [it (?)] now.

Emily: Well, tell us. Tell us how you cooked and what you cooked on?

Aunt Phoebe Boyd: They had, you know these, used to have chimneys.

Emily: Yeah.

Aunt Phoebe Boyd: You know—

Emily: I know.

Aunt Phoebe Boyd: —houses. When they hired me out they hired me out to learn me how to knit and sew—

Emily: Yeah.

Aunt Phoebe Boyd: —and work from the time I could [see (?)]. That's what Mrs. [Pickins (?)]. [Mirrors fine (?)] you see the sewing machine.

Emily: Yeah.

Aunt Phoebe Boyd: And you see these tops what they knitting now?

Emily: Ahha.

Aunt Phoebe Boyd: They are, they are tough as [pines (?)]. Them knit them not a one a took the heel off they could be, be, tough, tough as they is now. [*laugh*]

Emily: Ahha.

Aunt Phoebe Boyd: And ah, we used to have, you know, the chimneys didn't have no fireplace like they got now. No fireplaces at all. They had to have, you could put almost a whole [rain (?)] on it. Had the, the, the fireplace here and the flue, the chimney went on out and fire down here. And you could, you could set, you could, they have on each side, you know, a, a shelves for to put your cook; and when you had the fire you had to have a rack. They don't have them now, something like this here thing.

Emily: Ahha.

Aunt Phoebe Boyd: What else? Fire [Department (?)] and fire from—

Emily: Was it raining?

Aunt Phoebe Boyd: Hmm?

Emily: Was it raining? ??? the fire on it?

Aunt Phoebe Boyd: No, because something like a I don't know what the, what the, these things, the fire was down here but these things was, was [six foot (?)] would hang the pot on the fire, they on over the fire. Now them is that day.

Emily: Yeah.

Aunt Phoebe Boyd: Them is that day.

Emily: Yeah.

Aunt Phoebe Boyd: Now they don't have no, now not the flue. Their flue, you buy, *[laugh]* did you live in the old house at—

Emily: No.

Aunt Phoebe Boyd: Who lives in that old house right there?

Emily: Belongs to [Whittman's place (?)].

Aunt Phoebe Boyd: Ahha. William ??? .

Emily: Yeah.

Aunt Phoebe Boyd: Hmm. Well, there's a fireplace in there.

Emily: Yeah. I have a fireplace in my home.

Aunt Phoebe Boyd: Do you? Because I done made many a fire [there for Miss Manny (?)]. *[laugh]* Have done many people cooked right in that house.

Emily: Yeah.

Aunt Phoebe Boyd: Yes, sir. That's all right. We done, done away with all them now.

Emily: Well, did the eating taste good?

Aunt Phoebe Boyd: Hmm?

Emily: Did the eating taste good when you cooked it that way?

Aunt Phoebe Boyd: Certainly! And baked biscuits. Had the oven bake your bread. You have fires on top the stove. I done showed that man one of my fires.

Guy S. Lowman: Yes, I remember.

Aunt Phoebe Boyd: Top stove no legs on it have fire underneath the bottom. You want to bake bread, or loaf bread every day. Put in that thing and put that pepper, put fire on top of it and brown it just as nice as could be. That's the way we used to do back then.

Emily: It taste better, I think.

Aunt Phoebe Boyd: Yes. That's the way it is.

Emily: Ummm.

Aunt Phoebe Boyd: And ah, don't even, reason why I ask now don't taste good to me.

Emily: *[laugh]* I like for you to talk a little bit about those fireplaces.

Aunt Phoebe Boyd: *[laugh]* Yeahha. I like, look where everything done changed.

Emily: Yeah.

Aunt Phoebe Boyd: Everything.

Emily: Yeah.

Aunt Phoebe Boyd: Yeah. Everything. Yeah. Well, I'm *[laugh]*. You and that, that gentleman both stay together?

Guy S. Lowman: Yes. We're sadly together now.

Aunt Phoebe Boyd: Is you?

Guy Lowman: Yes. We're both from Charlottesville, from the university.

Aunt Phoebe Boyd: Ummm. *[pause]* Well, I declare.

Mrs. John Faulconer Ware: You ever grow any tobacco aunt Phoebe?

Aunt Phoebe Boyd: Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. John Faulconer Ware: Tell us how you grew it. How you worked it and how you stored it.

Aunt Phoebe Boyd: I'm got tabacca [tobacco] right now. Why [*laugh*] sow the seed and a, I know cause I right know what I was thinking about tabacca. [Tend your own (?)]. M-my tabacca I ain't [seeds of (?)] cotton for ??? .

Mrs. John Faulconer Ware: When you grow it, did you cut it after it grow?

Aunt Phoebe Boyd: No, ma'am.

Mrs. John Faulconer Ware: You don't?

Aunt Phoebe Boyd: But we, we suffered you know under tobacco. I want to cut them out throw it in [see I can (?)]—

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